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DURENBERGER BLAMES REAGAN ADMINISTRATION FOR SOME NEWS LEAKS

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WASHINGTON

Sen. Dave Durenberger, the chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said Wednesday night the Reagan administration is itself to blame for news leaks that have harmed U.S. spying efforts.

Durenberger, speaking on a panel with Central Intelligence Agency Director William J. Casey, said the administration let sensitive information slip on several occasions this year when it was sought to rally support for the bombing of Libya and aid to the Nicaraguan rebels.

The Minnesota Republican said Casey himself emerged from a White House briefing a few months ago and revealed that Russian pilots were flying reconnaissance aircraft in Nicaragua.

"Though the damage in some of these cases is considerable ... I really don't know of any effort to restrain or to punish the officials that were responsible in each of these cases," Durenberger told 140 persons at the meeting of the Washington chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, the society of professional journalists.

Last fall, after Durenberger publicly criticized Casey's management of the CIA, Casey upbraided the senator and accused his committee of leaks.

Durenberger said it was ironic that the congressional intelligence committees often were "cut out of the information loop" because of leaks they had nothing to do with.

He said the media itself shares some of the blame for the current "prostitution" of U.S. intelligence-gathering activities.

"Generally, journalists are all too willing to be used in return for information. ... It is deplorable when stories which harm our interest, and potentially our citizens, are published for the sake of a scoop," he said.

Casey said he will press for tougher laws to punish both government employees who leak secrets and the news media for willfully publishing sensitive information.

"The KGB and other hostile intelligence services every year spend billions of dollars trying to acquire this information. But the unauthorized publication of restricted information hands to them on a silver platter information that their spies, their researches, their satellites are working 24 hours a day to uncover and use against us," Casey said.

The senator and the CIA chief were joined on the panel by two Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporters: Bob Woodward of The Washington Post, who is completing a book on the CIA, and James Polk, the NBC-TV reporter whom Casey asked the Justice Department in May to consider prosecuting for a brief report on the Ronald Pelton spy case.

Polk reported that Pelton, a former National Security Agency employee, had given the Soviets information about an eavesdropping operation by American submarines inside Russian harbors that was code named "Ivy Bells." Polk said he

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